

Mr. STIRLING. I cannot agree that the legislature should be restricted in this respect. There is no reason why the librarian, if they think proper, should not have an assistant. The constitution is intended to last many years. I take it for granted that is the theory at least. Nobody knows what the library may become. It may be increased 50,000 volumes, and one man may not be able to attend to it. You might put the construction upon it that he must make his fires, and perform such menial offices. There is not a library anywhere in which the chief officer is expected to do everything; to go up to the top shelves and get down the books necessary, for instance. There is almost everywhere an assistant.

I rose for the purpose of offering an amendment, which I do not intend to debate. The convention may adopt it, or reject it, as they choose. It seems to me there is no reason on the face of the earth, why the salary of the librarian should be fixed by the organic law of the State. If it has anything to do with the fundamental principles of our government, I should like to have it pointed out. The practice of fixing salaries in the constitution is unknown everywhere else in the country. The constitution of Maryland presents the singular spectacle of fixing the salary of every officer in the fundamental law, as if it never ought to be increased or diminished. The whole question of the compensation of the librarian depends upon circumstances. I think he does not receive any more than he is entitled to receive. I am perfectly willing to leave it to the legislature. I am perfectly well satisfied from what I know of the legislature that they are not going to pay too much. The greatest difficulty I ever found about the legislature was to get them to do anything for the library. My amendment is to strike out the words, "His salary shall be \$1,500 per annum," and to insert in the last line, after the word "duties," the words "and receive such compensation."

Mr. BELT. I shall vote for the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stirling) with great pleasure. Merely to indicate how our ideas had run together, I will read an amendment which I had drawn, and had proposed to offer. It was to strike out the words "\$1,500 per annum," and to insert "such amount as may be prescribed by the legislature." I shall vote for the amendment proposed by the gentleman from Baltimore.

Mr. STIRLING. There may be some doubt whether the word "law" will cover provisions of the existing constitution, and I will therefore make an addition to my amendment, to add at the end of the section the words, "or by the existing constitution."

Mr. VALLIANT. I have a proposition which I will submit to the consideration of the gentleman from Baltimore county (Mr. King)

and the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stirling.) It is to strike out "his salary shall be \$1,500 per annum," and insert "the salary of the present incumbent shall be \$1,500, beginning August 1, 1864, to continue until the close of his present term of office. Thereafter neither he nor his successors shall receive more than \$1,000, the amount to be fixed by the general assembly."

The PRESIDENT. The chair does not suppose that the present constitution will be adopted by August 1, 1864.

Mr. VALLIANT. When it is adopted the increased salary will begin from that time.

Mr. DANIEL. If we had not fixed and were not fixing the salary of almost every other officer in the constitution, I might favor the proposition of the gentleman from Baltimore city. But we are fixing the salary of almost every other officer. We fix the salaries of all the judges. We have fixed the salary of nearly every other officer who is named in the constitution. In adopting this, we should be violating the precedent of the other constitution which fixed those salaries.

Mr. STIRLING (interposing.) If my colleague will allow me, I will try to get rid of a difficulty which suggests itself, that if the old constitution is abolished there will be no salary provided for the librarian. I will modify the last sentence so as to read, "he shall perform such duties, and receive such compensation, as are now paid or prescribed, or may hereafter be prescribed by law."

The PRESIDENT. Of course he gets the salary of the present constitution until the new one is adopted.

Mr. STIRLING. Suppose the legislature does not make any provision. He must get what he now gets until the legislature make a provision. My amendment will cover that, because the appropriation bills fix what he gets.

Mr. DANIEL resumed. I was saying that I could not see what reason there could be for striking out this salary alone, and leaving the salary of every other officer in the constitution untouched. I have not heard a proposition emanating from anybody to strike out the salaries of the judges or of other officers, from the constitution. If you strike it out, the legislature must meet the question and determine it, and it may as well be determined by this body. It was determined in our previous constitution, and why shall we alter in this particular respect, and strike this out merely because the gentleman says it is filling up the constitution with too much partial legislation. It takes very few words to say that he shall have \$1,500; and it does seem to me that this correction ought to have commenced in other quarters and about other things. It would have been far more appropriate if we had left out a great deal of other partial legislation, rather than this amount which I think we